

Accessible Clientele Service Policy

Providing Services to People with Disabilities

Highlands Youth for Christ is committed to excellence in serving all clientele including people with disabilities.

Assistive devices

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clientele with disabilities while accessing our services.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Service animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

When a person with a disability enters a YFC site with an animal that is obviously a service animal, he/she will be permitted to enter all areas of the facility that are normally open to the public and third parties with the exception of the kitchen.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, a letter from a doctor or nurse documenting the need for a service animal must be presented.

Staff should not touch, speak to or in any other way interfere with the service animal.

Support persons

Highlands Youth for Christ will permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing services in premises open to the public or third parties.

Where there is a significant risk to the health and safety of the person with the disability or the health and safety of other people at the facility, Highlands Youth for Christ may request that the person with the disability (e.g. person with a severe seizure disorder, very limited mobility, serious mental health issue, etc.) be accompanied by a support person.

Staff member observes the situation and discusses his/her concerns with a Director.

Director determines whether there is significant risk to the person/other persons in allowing him/her to continue to use our services without additional support.

If a support person is deemed necessary, the person with the disability will be informed of our concern and will be asked to bring a support person of his/her choice on the next visit to the facility.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for clientele with disabilities, Highlands Youth for Christ and The Door staff will notify clientele promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at the entry points to the office and on the website.

Training for staff

Highlands Youth for Christ will provide training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf.

Individuals in the following positions will be trained:

- Administration staff
- Youth workers
- Volunteers
- Directors
- Drop-in centre coordinators
- Street Level workers
- Steering committee members
- Board members

This training will be provided to staff within 3-6 months of employment with Highlands Youth for Christ.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the clientele service standard
- Highlands Youth for Christ's plan related to the clientele service standard.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to use any accessible equipment that we have onsite (none at present)
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Highland Youth for Christ's services

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to this plan.

Feedback process

Clientele who wish to provide feedback on the way Highlands Youth for Christ provides services to people with disabilities can do so verbally with a staff member, complete a feedback form, or send communication via email, letter or fax.

All feedback will be directed to the relevant Satellite Director or Coordinator and copied to the Executive Director. Clientele can expect to hear back in 60 days.

Complaints will be addressed according to our organization's regular complaint management procedures.

Modifications to this or other policies

Any policy of Highlands Youth for Christ that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be **reviewed and** modified or removed.